5: Dorsey & Murie E,I-5 (1903-1907) 1940
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relatives were intimately concerned. The mother's brother paid much attention to the education of his sister's sons and daughters, in which, indeed, he took perhaps as much interest as their father. On the paternal side the children had what were known as children's rights in the father's sister's lodge. These were similar to the claims which children had upon parents, but in a sense entailed even deeper obligations, for though the children might be cast out of their parents' lodge, they could still claim food and shelter in the lodge of the father's sister. Next it should be noted that the father's sister's husband became the teacher and in some degree the guardian of his wife's brother's daughter, instructing her and looking after her interests. On the death of his wife, he might marry the girl, or even her daughters if she already had a husband.

It was not learned that there was any special custom observed when a girl reached her first menses, which usually occurred during her twelfth or thirteenth year. No recognition of the fact was made by the family or the tribe other than her mother or grandmother, unless she happened to be the daughter of the keeper of a sacred bundle. In this case the girl was removed to a little house, known as "place-sitting-with-blood," where she remained during her menstrual period with her grandmother. The girl neither bathed nor combed her hair and was not allowed to eat fresh meat, her food consisting chiefly of corn and pemmican brought by her mother. At the end of the period the grandmother took the girl to a creek, where they both bathed; the latter was then clothed with a new dress and was further purified by wrapping a blanket about herself and standing in the smoke rising from smoldering cedar leaves. Thereafter the grandmother took care of her in the same manner at each period of menstruation. When the girl married, she continued the custom but no one assisted her. The observance of this period was so far as possible always kept secret.

A menstruating woman was considered unclean, and the chief restriction placed against her was that she should in no way come in contact with the sacred bundles nor approach the objects contained in them. This restriction prohibited her from appearing at sacred bundle ceremonies. The reason seems to be based on the theory that the bundles and all objects of a religious nature carried with them their own odor, which was that of sweet grass. This odor was not only acceptable and pleasing, but it was essentially a non-human odor. The odor of the menstrual flow was considered a distinctly human odor and the presence of such a human charac-

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784 teristic at a bundle ceremony would distract the attention of the
841 supernatural beings. If a menstruating woman were near a bundle spread out as an altar, the supernatural power supposed to reside in the objects on the altar would disappear; the corn mother would be corn mother no longer but simply an ear of corn, the bird messenger between the deities and man would become simply a bird skin, and so on. The odor of blood was pleasing to the gods, but not this kind of blood, which was associated with human passion. If a menstruating woman should go into a ceremony of the medicine-men, the strong human odor would cause the power of the medicine-men to leave them, and they would fail in their sleight of hand. The lodge where the ceremony was being held was for the time being an animal's lodge; it was full of animal power, over which each medicine-man was striving to make himself master. In this attempt he would fail should a menstruating woman be present, for she would cause him to become essentially human. What animal power he had would quickly desert him.

881 The custom in vogue when a girl reached puberty has been noted.
882 When a boy reached this stage, there was no formal ceremony to
607 mark the event. He was, however, taken in charge by his mother's
836 brother's wife. From this time until his marriage, he maintained sexual relations with her, and entered a different stage immediately after having had intercourse with this woman. When her real husband was off hunting or on the warpath, the youth continued marital relations with her. Thus it might happen that for four or
[595] five years a woman would have an additional "husband," or possibly three or four, with a temporary state of polyandry thereby prevailing.
[834] No such custom as this existed for girls, as they were supposed to remain virgins until marriage.

882 Up to this time the boy went naked, except for a blanket or robe
291 in cold weather. From then on he wore leggings, and otherwise dressed as a man.

857 A further word should be said as to the relationship of the sexes. Great freedom was allowed children, and it was their custom as they neared puberty to play the game of man and wife. They built small grass lodges which they furnished as were the lodges of their parents.
836 Should the parents, however, suspect that an improper relationship might ensue, the girls were more carefully watched or might be kept at home. Thereafter the only opportunity for the boy to see the girl would be at the spring or creek when the girl went for water, or he might see her by stealth in the evening near her lodge. Often this